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Statement submitted by Interregional Union of Life Help for Mentally Handicapped Persons "Sail of Hope", a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/2014/1/Rev.1, annex II.

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Statement

The main merit of the Millennium Development Goals is that they have served as a stimulus for increasing the funds allocated by industrialized countries for the solution of problems of developing countries, as well as focused the attention of world leaders and the public on key aspects of progress and set the tone in the area of assistance to international progress.

The Millennium Development Goals are not a completed programme — the majority of the objectives have not been reached — and they focus too heavily on the social aspects of progress. They do not reflect some fundamental values and the process of their adoption was not open and representative. Due attention has not been given to such matters as existing inequality, poverty in the unsustainable States and the interrelationship between effective management and development.

We non-governmental organizations (NGOs) urge systematic change in our economic thinking and acting, as we see the business-as-usual economy as the main driver of unsustainability and impoverishment. We want to move away from the old paradigm of development as growth of gross domestic product towards creating well-being for all. Poverty eradication can only be achieved if we focus on taking away all kinds of inequalities and emphasize redistribution of wealth. A rights-based approach is crucial.

The main principles of the human rights-based approach should become accountability, transparency, participation, equality, absence of discrimination and expansion of the rights and possibilities (empowerment) of people. The struggle against poverty is impossible without a solution to unemployment, which is the pre-eminent problem.

The initiative of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, Education First, launched in September 2012, alongside the problem of attracting financing for educational projects, also pursues the objective of including education as one of the main goals of the new agenda. But it is necessary to offer solutions not only to problems of access to education, but also of its quality, as well as the development of professional skills. For many countries, including the Russian Federation, the question of the quality of vocational training, which is a pillar of the average business, is also one of economic progress of the country, a very timely issue.

We plan to continue our contributions, for example, by modelling methods of monitoring, work on legal proposals, targeted campaigns, producing sustainable living programmes and lobbying for systemic change. Civil society organizations allow expertise and opinions from many groups of society to be shared actively and constructively, and make a unique and valuable contribution. NGOs also need to further ensure the implementation of the sustainable development goals and a rights-centred approach as a practical tool for policy makers that can guide Governments in designing their public policies.